# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **TITLE** | **Outcome of consultation on Bridgend health board boundary change proposals** |
| **DATE** | **14 June 2018** |
| **BY** | **Vaughan Gething, Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Services** |

On 13 December last year the Welsh Government issued a consultation proposing

that responsibility for healthcare services in the Bridgend County Borough Council (CBC) area should transfer to Cwm Taf University Health Board (Cwm Taf) from Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board (ABM); moving the health board boundary accordingly.

The purpose of the proposed change, as outlined in the consultation, is to ensure Bridgend CBC is not disadvantaged working with multiple-strategic partners across two strategic footprints, to support the strengthening of regional partnership arrangements and facilitate more effective leadership and decision making.

The consultation closed on 7 March and the summary of responses is available at:

<https://beta.gov.wales/proposed-health-board-boundary-change-bridgend>

The analysis of the consultation is now complete, and I am today publishing a summary of the responses. The key findings were that:

* responses were relatively evenly balanced between those that agreed and those that disagreed that changing the health board boundary would strengthen partnership working arrangements;
* respondents that included comments supporting the proposal considered that partnership arrangements would be strengthened by the boundary change, and tended to agree that the current arrangements were challenging for Bridgend CBC;
* those that concluded they did not consider partnership arrangements would be strengthened by the boundary change generally raised concerns about the possible impact on health services, transport issues linked to concerns about service location change, cost and changes to individual care;
* there was a strong correlation on the issues that were raised at the stakeholder events and the online responses to the consultation;
* the consultation highlighted that under the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, regional partnership boards, safeguarding boards and regional adoption collaboratives would need to be realigned;
* the key organisations involved in delivering the boundary change expressed a firm view that April 2019 was preferred over April 2020, the alternative date proposed in the consultation; and
* few respondents raised any matters related to the Welsh Language or the equality impact assessments.

I have taken careful note of the concerns raised by individuals and organisations about the impact on service provision in Bridgend and the wider ABM health board area.

I recognise that any proposed change to health structures raises concern about the effect on individual patient care and service provision generally and are grateful to the health boards for their assurance that there are no planned service changes linked to the boundary change.

Should there be any future requirement to change services in the Bridgend area to improve quality or sustainability, the health boards have confirmed that those proposals would be the subject of a separate public engagement and, where appropriate, consultation. Both the health boards have also emphasised that irrespective of the health board boundary change, they remain committed to delivering safe, sustainable, high quality services as locally as possible for all patients.

I have carefully considered the responses to the consultation and discussed the changes required to effect the proposals with the health boards and Bridgend CBC. It is now my clear view that the health board boundary should be changed in accordance with the proposal. I consider that an expeditious timeline would prevent prolonged uncertainty for staff, patients and in the on-going development of key partnership arrangements. Therefore, my intention is for the boundary change to take effect from 1 April 2019. The Welsh Government will continue to work with the health boards and other partners as preparations for the boundary change are developed and the relevant legislation will be brought forward in due course.

I am grateful to all those who took the time to participate in the consultation exercise.